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the

Commonweal

JOHN O'GRADY

THE McCARRAN IMMIGRATION BILL

FRANCIS X. DUGGAN

THE SORCERER'S APPRENTICE

GEOFFREY ASHE
ROBERT BARRAT
T. E. CASSIDY

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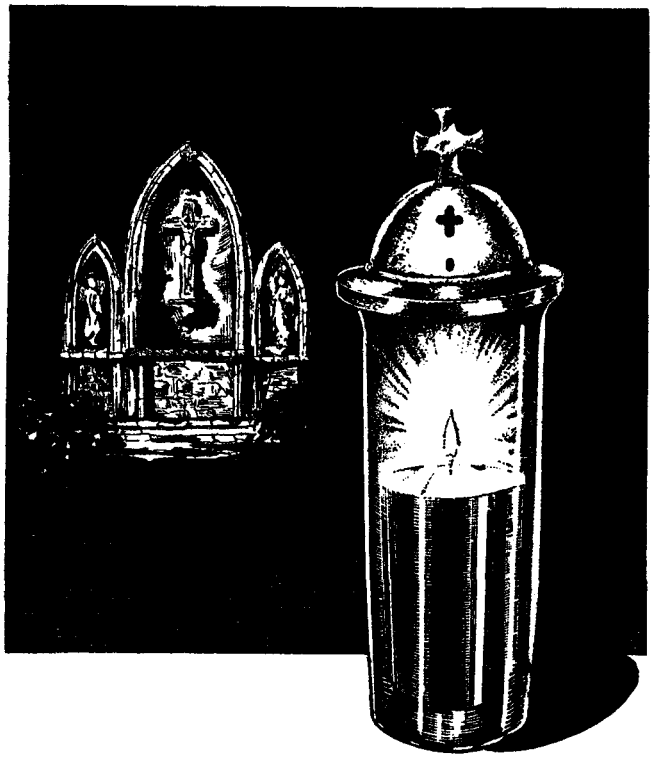

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THE Commonweal

week by week

THE CRITICS AND THE ABSOLUTES

MR. Whittaker Chambers' *Witness,* as was anticipated, has received a lively critical reception. Not for years has there been such widespread discussion, pro and con, of a single book. Mr. Chambers touched on many things in his brilliant autobiography, but the critical debate has been largely focused on his defense of the absolutes, to use the fashionable vocabulary of the literary supplements—or, in other words, on his insistence that belief in God and in an unchanging moral order is the only road to political salvation.

To say, as Mr. Chambers did, that basically the world conflict is between "the two great camps of men—those who reject and those who worship God" is not to argue—as Mr. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. had it in the *Saturday Review*—that "belief infallibly creates humility." History is full of believing scoundrels and agnostic saints. It is hard to believe that Mr. Chambers or any other believer would deny that, and it is somewhat footless to point out that faith does not assure sanctity, any more than agnosticism or atheism assures villainy. It is simply not the point.

The point is that the scoundrel is a scoundrel to the degree that he rejects the claims of his Absolute and the agnostic saint is acclaimed not for his pragmatic successes but for his fidelity to the standards of moral goodness which he theoretically rejects as meaningless. It is only because of some unspoken appeal to absolute standards that Mr. Schlesinger himself can speak of Torquemada, Ivan the Great and Hitler with horror and get from his *Saturday Review* readers the kind of reaction he seeks.

Mr. Chambers, says Mr. Schlesinger, "while he has the beast by the tail, does not name it correctly. The essential issue is not belief in God. It is rather the sense of human limitation, of human fallibility, of what he himself [Chambers] calls the 'moral incompleteness of man.' "

But Mr. Schlesinger does not thereby solve the problem of the absolutes, he creates a new problem. Without belief in God, just what limitation has been placed on man? Without belief in an ultimate Absolute, what is the test of fallibility? Under these circumstances, what exactly does "moral incompleteness" mean?

IT is easy enough to sympathize with Mr. Schlesinger and the other critics of Chambers' absolutism. Certainly among believers there have been numerous and disastrous attempts to apply simple absolute standards to complex situations, with no regard for their complexity. Because their standards are simple, many professed "absolutists" have treated their applications as if it were a simple matter of matching pieces. But this kind of jigsaw moralizing derives not so much from a respect for the truth, which is often very complex, as from the germ of pragmatism itself, which drives one to find solutions at whatever cost.

There is something too that might be called an absolutist temperament or disposition which we find as offensive as Mr. Schlesinger probably does. This is the mentality which conceives of intolerance and the closed mind as the tribute Truth demands. But bigotry of this kind is a psychological phenomenon rather than a necessary philosophical adjunct of belief in unchanging absolutes. It is precisely because he is not sure that the bigot closes his mind and wraps himself in the protecting armor of what he calls absolutism.

Again, there are many historical examples of men and groups who have tried to *use* belief in God—as many today want to employ religious faith as a means to a political end, in their anxiety to defeat Communism. These are the believers who *insist* on faith from others, as one might insist on obedience, and have no patience with either God's slowness to grant the gift of faith or man's slowness to accept it. Such believers seem to conceive of religious faith and sureness not so much as a divine gift as a political weapon.

All these miscarriages of faith, understandably, may repel unbelievers and bring on a distaste for

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an absolutist philosophy. But it is useful to recall that it is in pragmatism itself that their seeking after quick solutions and almost frantic desire for a "workable" credo are rooted.

Mr. Chambers may have oversimplified a problem if, as Schlesinger says, he believes mankind can be unqualifiedly herded "into worshippers and rejectors." Not everyone who cries Lord, Lord belongs with the "worshippers," nor indeed are all who think they have rejected God because they have rejected a religious caricature, among the expelled. But the fact remains that what Communism attacks is belief in God and in transcendental standards of good or evil, and what Communism exalts is the ends-justify-the-means philosophy of the concentration camp. American pragmatists, who are men of good will, may be horrified by the logical extremes to which their philosophy is carried in the Soviet but their shock speaks more kindly for their hearts than it does for their philosophy.

In parts of Europe and the Orient during our own lifetime we have seen where the rejection of absolute standards leads. It leads to a pragmatic blind alley which ends up looking very much like the Absolute at the opposite pole of the one which Mr. Chambers has embraced. In the still free world we are watching the gradual disappearance of the Natural Law as a standard for personal, political and international behavior, and the gradual acceptance of birth prevention, abortion and euthanasia—all sanctioned by the beneficence of a gentle pragmatism. Do we have any reason to believe the same philosophy will not carry its attack on man somewhat further? If modern history has taught us nothing else, we have learned from it that men will resist just about everything but logic.

NEXT WEEK

PIERRE EMMANUEL, French poet and critic, discusses the responsibilities of the writer.

"There is not a literary journal which fails to raise this question in some fashion every year. To make answer is a part of the necessary payment by which an author calls attention to himself, gives the public a sample of his profound thoughts, sweats blood in many cases to distinguish himself at all costs, then ends by finding that he is much the same as the man printed in the column next to his. At first I had no particular objection to such inquiries, but they have finally by their very repetition, alerted me to the threat against the interior life which they clearly foreshadow."

MR. RHEE'S OFFER

IT is a matter of extreme delicacy when a government receives suggestions about the conduct of its domestic affairs from a foreign government. The United States and the other UN members that recently made representations to Mr. Syngman Rhee did so with reluctance. But the South Koreans adopted their present Constitution under UN auspices; the maintenance of their political liberties is of general concern. Moreover the UN forces in Korea would be gravely jeopardized by political collapse and chaos behind their own lines. Representations to Mr. Rhee were patently in order.

At the outset, his declaration of martial law in Pusan and the arrest of twelve opposition members of the National Assembly seemed to be signs of the South Korean President's unalterable desire to succeed himself. His consistent demand that the Constitution be amended so that the President be chosen by direct popular vote seemed simply to be his means of shifting ground; if constitutional procedure were followed and an election held in the National Assembly before June 23, Mr. Rhee would be doomed to defeat.

That Syngman Rhee is a true patroit is beyond question. He endured imprisonment and torture at the hands of the Japanese for the sake of his patriotic beliefs. During years of exile from his native land he worked untiringly for the recognition of his people's claims to independence. When he returned in triumph to head the new Republic of Korea, he took a vigorous grasp of the reins of government. Now, at the age of seventy-seven, he gives the strong impression that he believes himself to be his harassed nation's indispensable man.

There is something puzzling about his current compromise offer. His agreement to step down if certain constitutional amendments are enacted might mean that in face of all the domestic and foreign opposition to him, he has given up his fight. On that interpretation he seeks direct popular elections and a two-chamber legislature as a parting concession from the Assembly that would give him prestige. Or else he has some very cogent reasons for these structural changes in the governance of South Korea which he has not divulged to the Western press. He can scarcely be counting on running for office again four years from now.

It is more likely that Mr. Rhee has in mind some means of revoking his plan to step down. There may be some device whereby a constitutional amendment adopted to apply for future elections could suddenly be put currently in force. The outcome of the dispute between Mr. Rhee and his parliamentary opposition bears watching. But we

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should be happier about the various interventions on behalf of political liberties in South Korea—in the name of democracy—if the United States and the other UN nations were to give more evidence of their interest in the day-by-day subsistence and future prospects of the destitute South Koreans.

THE COURT ON STEEL

HAVING opposed the method of President Truman's seizure of the steel plants on Constitutional grounds, we welcome the recent ruling of the Supreme Court which reversed his action. The history of the matter indicates, we think, that on this issue Mr. Truman was on the receiving end of some very poor advice.

The government never really showed that a strike which was not unduly prolonged would in fact constitute a genuine national emergency. If that point had been established, legislative authorization of seizure could have been sought, since Congress was in session. It even seems possible that direct placement of defense contracts with the struck plants would have enabled the government to seize the mills legally, because of the inevitable failure to fulfill essential defense commitments. Under the circumstances the course of action the President chose to follow was ill-conceived, and it was rightly struck down.

At the same time we do not think the judicial decision should be construed in such a way as to render the President impotent in a genuine national emergency. In such crises there is ample ground in precedent and in common sense for effective and vigorous action by the President. But the decision in the steel case was a healthy one because it limited such Presidential action precisely to those situations which endanger national safety and which leave no other recourse open to the Chief Executive.

Nor do we think that this ruling of the Supreme Court should be considered an anti-labor decision. We say this even though the decision has been hailed in anti-union circles, and despite the fact that the support for seizure came largely from labor publications and those sympathetic to labor.

Although it is true that each of the justices who comprised the majority in the six-to-three decision found it necessary to write an individual opinion, we consider it significant that in this case judges long counted in the liberal wing of the Court voted against government seizure. Rather than being interpreted as an anti-labor decision, the ruling should be considered as another example of the growing and healthy concern of the Court for the protection of individual liberties from arbitrary infringement.

Since the free labor unions are among the first targets of any authoritarian political movement, labor's long-range welfare is served by this decision. If the notion of government by law rather than by men was in any danger of becoming a legal cliché, this decision has breathed into it new life and power. In an era in which the growth of totalitarianism is the outstanding fact of political life, that is all to the good.

CONGRESSIONAL SALARIES

PRESIDENT Truman has been talking for a long time about the difficulty of attracting and retaining top-flight talent in government jobs. Nor is he alone in his complaint. Many political scientists are troubled by the increasing gap between the responsibilities of public service and the financial return. If the trend continues, they say, it could well mean that government service will eventually be a luxury only the rich can afford.

Members of Congress are personally affected by this situation, and many of them have long been conscious of the problem. But they are also aware that any move to raise their own salaries could be political dynamite, and they are understandably reluctant to give political opponents at home such a made-to-order weapon against them. Now someone has come up with an idea which does not deal with this problem directly but does promise some help for legislators hard-pressed to make ends meet.

Most Congressmen must support two domestic establishments, one in their home districts and another in Washington. In addition to this double burden, they have expenses in connection with their official positions which they must meet out of their own pockets. If an amendment recently passed by the House survives, in the future a Congressman will for tax purposes be able to list his local residence as home. Then he will be allowed to deduct his outlay in Washington as a business expense and thus gain a considerable saving in taxes in lieu of a raise.

The feeling in Washington is that this backdoor approach to the problem will leave Congressmen less vulnerable politically than would an out-and-out increase in salary. Whether this is true or not is debatable. In view of the recent scandals in the Internal Revenue department special tax regulations for Congressmen might give them more trouble at home than a straightforward increase in salary.

But there is no doubt that something ought to be done. If salary increases are out of the question in an election year, the entire matter of government salaries could well be included among the important items of business facing the new Congress.

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OUR WASHINGTON LOBBIES

LAST year's expenditures of the largest registered lobby organizations give a very rough approximation of the organized pressures most felt by Congress. Far and away the biggest of the figures just released is the million and a half spent by the American Farm Bureau Federation, but "little of this went for legislative purposes." The "Committee for Constitutional Government" expended three-quarters of a million in its curious efforts to further *laissez faire*. Third on the list is the American Medical Association, whose declining Washington outlay perhaps reflects a certain confidence that at least temporarily the threat of national health insurance has been repulsed. The National Association of Electric Companies and the National Association for Advancement of Colored People round out the first five big spenders.

There are times when Congressmen and their committees find the "educational" facilities which such lobbies provide are of considerable use. It is possible to make of such selective "information" approximately what it is worth. It is the inequalities in representation at the nation's capitol that are disturbing. The small business man often finds that it is no contest, while the consumer and other interests of the general public prove to be the concern of no one in particular. Naturally pork barrels and well-represented commodities and ideas gain preference. Annual publication of the figures, in the *Congressional Quarterly* and elsewhere, if worth doing, serves but as a mild restraint on the best-heeled pressure groups.

THE GENERAL AND THE PRESS

TWO sharply divergent things seem to have emerged during General Eisenhower's first week home. On the one hand, in speaking his mind on the major problems confronting us, the General has resolutely refused to involve himself in any obvious partisanship or oversimplification. On the other hand, many among both his friends and foes in the American press seem determined to make partisan capital out of his position. "I am not going to indulge in any kind of personalities under any pretext whatsoever," Eisenhower has declared. But "he shall so indulge and he shall see things as either-or," many papers have apparently insisted. The results of this divergence have been curious—and disillusioning.

For example, it is difficult to imagine two papers more usually opposed, in both their techniques and their appeal, than the New York *Daily News* and the New York *Times*. In their reporting of the Eisenhower candidacy, however, they seem to share some remarkable ability for hearing the General say more than the rest of us hear.

On Thursday, June 5, the New York *Daily News* carried the headline "Ike Hits 'Evils' of HST Control" and reported that Eisenhower "criticized failure of the Administration's Far Eastern policy—'one of the greatest international disasters of our time.' " On the same day, the New York *Times* carried headlines proclaiming that Eisenhower "Scores Foreign and Domestic Record" and "Decries China Loss."

Readers of these journals who had heard the General's televised speech from Kansas the night before must have been deeply puzzled at all this bellicocity, as would those who took the trouble actually to read the General's words rather than these newspapers' reporting of them. Eisenhower's speech was so generalized that it could, for the most part, have been made by Dean Acheson, who would certainly agree that the loss of China was a "disaster," or by Mr. Truman, who would join the General in deploring inflation, instability and "unhappy confusion." At no point did he make any specific indictment of the Administration for the "loss of China" or its over-all foreign policy.

Even more remarkable, however, was the reporting of Eisenhower's June 5 press conference. The *Times* head read, "He Blames 'Party in Power' for China." This was the impression, apparently, which this responsible journal received from Ike's "I do not know who is to blame for the loss of China. I do know that the diplomatic triumphs of that period, if any, were claimed by the party in power. The party in power, therefore, has to take some responsibility for any losses we have suffered."

The motives of the *Daily News* and the *Times* are probably different here. The tabloid doesn't particularly like Eisenhower, but if it must take him (as it must eventually take any Republican candidate) it will do all it can to re-create him in its own image. The *Times*, on the other hand, which likes Ike very much, is probably afraid that its man won't get the nomination unless he says (or, failing that, is made to say) some of the things which the "I hate Truman and the State Department" crowd is longing to hear.

Alas, poor Eisenhower. His public pronouncements to date have been distinguished by their temperance and humility. As the campaign progresses, many people may decide they cannot vote for him, but no one can deny that he brings to his candidacy an integrity and dignity long absent from the political scene. But these, apparently, are not enough. They may enable him to triumph over his foes, but who shall save him from his friends?

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The McCarran Immigration Bill

"THE PERPETUATION OF THE DOCTRINE OF NORDIC SUPERIORITY IS THE BASIC QUESTION"

JOHN O'GRADY

THE Senate debate preceding the passage of the McCarran Omnibus Immigration Bill was the first real discussion we have had on immigration for twenty-seven years. The exchanges on the floor of the Senate brought out into the open most of the implications of our restrictive immigration legislation. Able speeches were made by Senators Lehman, Benton, Humphrey, Douglas, O'Mahoney, Pastore, McMahon, Moody, Ives and others, which should be studied by anyone who wants to erase the basic prejudices now contained in our immigration legislation.

I do not see how any fair-minded person can examine American immigration legislation since 1921 without being aroused by the prejudices involved in it. I do not see how anybody can study the McCarran Omnibus Bill and its companion bill, introduced by Representative Walter and recently passed by the House of Representatives, without being greatly disturbed by them. This legislation has been debated at a period in which the world is most sensitive to the thinking of the people of the United States. I doubt if there has ever before been a piece of legislation passed by Congress so capable of jeopardizing our international relations as the McCarran-Walter Bill.

It had been hoped during the past five years that the new world position of the United States would induce it to take a more Christian and more humane attitude toward immigration. The passing of the Displaced Persons Act in 1948 and of its amendments in 1950 contributed to this belief. The fact that the United States has offered a haven to nearly three hundred and fifty thousand displaced persons since the beginning of 1949 was certainly encouraging. But now the McCarran-Walter Bill, which contains more inequities than any immigration bill ever passed by Congress, threatens to close our doors tighter than ever.

The strongest criticism that can be leveled at the McCarran Bill is its injustice to the peoples of Southern and Eastern Europe.

Take, for example, what this measure would mean to the people of Italy. The McCarran Bill perpetuates against the Italians all the injustices originally included in the Quota Act of 1924 and the National Origins formula adopted in 1929, really designed to bar people born in Southern and Eastern Europe. At the time we heard the old stories against them—that they were unassimilable, that they were clannish, that there were higher rates of delinquency among them. But underlying all these claims was the real reason for the restrictions—a new philosophy of Nordic superiority. Without saying it in so many words, our immigration was framed in the belief that the peoples of Anglo-Saxon and Teutonic origin were superior peoples, and that peoples of Southern and Eastern Europe were inferior. Therefore, the legislators reasoned, everything possible should be done to keep people from Southern and Eastern Europe out of the stream of U. S. life.

This perpetuation of the doctrine of Nordic superiority I regard as the basic question involved in the discussion of the McCarran Bill. The bill makes our National Origins legislation even more rigid and more exclusive, and this is the point that should be emphasized all over the country.

THE National Quota Act, with its new National Origins formula, went into effect in 1929. How it worked out can be seen in the case of Italy. For the period from 1900 to 1910, Italian immigration amounted to 2,045,877, or an average of over 200,000 a year. By the Act of 1921, it was reduced to 42,000 a year. Under the National Origins legislation it was further reduced to 5,800 a year.

The McCarran Bill will, I believe, make it difficult to admit even this number, and what has been said about Italy might also be said with equal truth about Greece, Austria, Hungary, Poland, and Yugoslavia. In the case of nations like Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, it may be said that there is no need for concern at the present about immigration since these countries are behind the Iron Curtain. But we are concerned about refugees from those countries and about the fact that in the Displaced Persons legislation their quotas have been frozen for years to come.

Monsignor O'Grady is Secretary of the National Conference of Catholic Charities.

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Under our regular immigration legislation, not a single Austrian can get into this country before 1955. Not a single Latvian can get in before 2074. No Lithuanians can get in before 2087, and not one Pole before 1999. The only hope of the refugees who are still coming out of these countries is special legislation to remove the immigration restrictions; the McCarran Bill continues the principle of freezing all quotas originally included in the Displaced Persons Act.

In a speech before the Senate on May 19th, Senator Paul Douglas of Illinois pointed out:

> When the Irish came to this country in the 1840's and 1850's, the native white stock pronounced them to be unassimilable and inferior, and organized against them. . . . Some pretty rough tactics were used against the Irish, and some pretty rough things were said about them. We have now had a century of experience. I think the Irish have established themselves as a worthy element in American life.

In speaking of the different waves of immigration, the able Senator went on to say:

> Differences do not mean inferiority. I believe that at times America is enriched by the fact that there are differences. Think of the contributions which the Southern and Eastern Europeans have made in the field of art and music. We Yankees are a somewhat dour people. We have never been accused of having within us a high percentage of artistic qualities. If America had to depend upon the people of my stock to fill its symphony orchestras, write its music, and provide its painters and sculptors, it would be an aesthetically barren country.

And then the Senator added a sad note:

> At each stage in American history the recent comer has been looked down upon by those who were already here. . . . The tragedy is that sometimes those who came here and were oppressed when they were new immigrants, once they established themselves, looked down upon the recent immigrant.

All Americans should study the implications of Senator Douglas' remarks. Certainly the attitude he describes is very like that of many Catholic leaders toward the National Origins legislation of 1924. From it developed one of the saddest chapters in Catholic history in the U. S. and the frame of mind of many Catholic leaders toward the McCarran Bill is equally sad. If we had worked hand in hand on this matter with other religious denominations, the McCarran Bill would never, in my opinion, have passed the Senate.

In his Omnibus Bill, Senator McCarran does make what at first sight looks like a generous gesture toward Oriental countries, including the Philippine Islands, Japan, India, China and Pakistan. To each of these countries he would assign an annual quota of one hundred. But follow through and see how this works out in the case of the Filipinos.

Heretofore, Filipinos have had no quota; they were free to come to the United States without any restrictions as to numbers. Now they are going to have a generous annual quota of one hundred. But, if a Filipino who was born in Brazil wanted to come to the United States, he would have to come in under that quota of one hundred. This ruling would apply if he were only fifty per cent Filipino, and the same would be true of Filipinos living in any other country in the world.

Colored people can still come in from Brazil without any restrictions, provided of course they can pass the literacy test and can establish the fact that they will not become dependents. Within the past few years the U. S. has been leaning somewhat on Jamaican labor for the harvesting of crops. From two to three thousand Jamaicans have been coming in each year. Since Jamaica is a British colony, these workers came in under the unused British quota. Now, this British colony is placed under its own quota of one hundred a year. The same is true of Trinidad and other European colonies in the Caribbean.

Those who back the McCarran Bill claim that these new restrictions on immigration from British and other European colonies are designed to prevent the migration of large numbers of people from these colonies to the U. S. But despite the fact that they could have come in under the quotas of the mother countries, the fact is that no large numbers have ever come in, probably because not many of them could pass the literacy test or demonstrate to the satisfaction of the American Consul that they could be self-supporting.

AN important limitation of the Omnibus Immigration Bill is its failure to provide adequate protection for people who are threatened with deportation. In deportation cases the McCarran Bill authorizes the Attorney General to appoint an Examiner. But this Examiner has no independence; he is a part of the staff of the Bureau of Immigration. He may be hearing cases today and working up evidence for deporting people tomorrow. What this procedure virtually amounts to is that the Immigration Bill really makes no effective provision for hearings in deportation cases.

This lack is one of the great defects in the administration of our immigration legislation. The officials of the Immigration Bureau are subject to constant pressures for more rigid administration. If the McCarran Bill becomes law, the provision for fair hearing and judicial determination of cases of deportation will become doubly important. But in fact this bill makes it easier for the Immigration Bureau to deport people.

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It shows a drift toward a time when it will be relatively simple for the Attorney General to deport an alien for any one of a variety of causes, or to denaturalize a person who may have been a United States citizen for many years.

ALL proponents of decent, humane immigration legislation had hoped that such legislation would attempt to eliminate, at least in part, the injustices of the National Origins Act. They had hoped that any new long-term legislation would provide for the pooling of the unused quotas under the National Origins Act, which are largely those of Great Britain and Ireland. The National Origins Act set the British quota at 65,721, but in no year have the British used more than a third of this number. The Irish quota was set at 17,853, but from 10,000 to 12,000 of this quota has not been used each year.

One proposal included in the Lehman-Humphrey Bill would pool the unused quotas of from sixty to seventy thousand among the countries with very low quotas. This provision would be of great importance in the Italian situation. The Lehman-Humphrey Bill would base the quotas on the 1950 Census instead of the Census of 1920. Since the population in this period has increased by forty millions, this would mean considerably increased quotas for the various countries. The Lehman-Humphrey Bill would also include Indians and Negroes in computing the population on which quotas are based. This would have the effect of upping the British quota very greatly and increasing the number of immigrants who could be admitted from 153,000 to 263,000.

Those who have been interested in promoting a Christian philosophy of immigration, in keeping with the attitude of Pope Pius XII, were greatly distressed to read the statement to the press, dated April 26, 1952, by Mr. Bruce Mohler, Director of the Bureau of Immigration of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. In this statement Mr. Mohler announced that the NCWC had supported the Omnibus Immigration Bills, and he referred to certain provisions of the proposed legislation as a milestone in American history. Again, in a letter to Senator McCarran, dated May 8, 1952, Mr. Mohler virtually states that the NCWC has supported the legislation.

In my opinion, Mr. Mohler's statement and his letter do not represent the considered thinking of the Bishops of the United States. They are certainly at variance with the attitudes expressed by representatives of Catholic organizations at a meeting held on March 3, 1952, to discuss policies of immigration legislation. It is hard to understand why the statement was made or the letter written. The legislation proposed by Senator McCarran deserves no such support.

The Catholic Intellectuals' Week

IF YOU had been visiting Paris early in May and had asked me what you could see that would give you some idea of the present vitality of Catholic intellectual life in France, I would have sent you at once to Sainte-Odile. This is a modern church of brick and ceramics built twenty years ago by Pierre l'Ermite —the nom-de-plume of a priest who writes novels intended to edify. The funds for its construction were donated by the readers of *la Croix* (French Catholic daily). This church has nothing distinctive about it to attract Catholic intellectuals except its large crypt, which is unobstructed and silent and therefore ideal as a lecture hall.

That is where every year the French Catholic Intellectuals hold their week-long meetings—the *Semaine des Intellectuels Catholiques*. Each evening from a thousand to twelve hundred people take their places on uncomfortable chairs: young and old, veiled nuns and abbés in worn soutanes, learned professors, publishers, well-known leaders of Catholic Action movements and a not inconsiderable number of Protestants and even unbelievers.

Some hold their heads in their hands; others take notes; all are serious and attentive. What is most important to them is not to miss a single word of what the speakers have to say. The lecturers usually number four or five each evening. The tone of the lectures varies. At times it may be a warm exhortation, at others an exposition rich in learning, again a kind of spiritual meditation.

The professions of these speakers are likewise diverse. There are physicians, professors, scientists, technicians, theologians, diocesan priests, Religious of every order, people known as progressives and others considered reactionaries—it makes little difference. They have come to share their sincere and disinterested thinking, and in the service of the Church.

But I must say a word about the Catholic Center of French Intellectuals which brings these speakers together and encourages them to take part in the discussions. The Center will soon be ten years old. Like many of the new Catholic movements in France it bears witness to the desire for a reawakening on the part of Catholicism after the bitter self-examination brought on after 1940 by the national defeat. It became evident then that for many intellectuals there was

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a great separation between their general culture, which was often very substantial, and their knowledge of religion, which often had remained in an embryonic state. There was a gap, for example, between the religious problems which confront a modern scientist and the speculative theology taught by the professors at seminaries or Catholic institutes. A few men therefore developed the idea of founding a center where theologians and men of secular learning could meet and bring together their works and discourse in common on matters of burning interest.

This Center went into full swing after the Liberation when public meetings could again take place. There were debates which became famous in Paris, held at the Cloister of Saint Séverin. Philosophers, theologians, doctors, publicly discussed human nature, the books of Simone Weil or Graham Greene, theories of evolution or of the end of the world. The principal speakers met in advance but the audience was permitted to ask questions from the floor.

Soon it was evident that there was a tremendous interest in this new form of teaching, which was so alive and so open. It also became clear that there was a widespread desire in Paris for a deepening of basic religious and theological knowledge. How many Christians there are engaged in an active apostolate who have not succeeded in resolving their own problems because they lack this basic Christian culture.

The idea of selecting a general theme for researches and studies during the university year and of submitting it to the reflections of all who attended the meetings and followed the Center's publications was an early development. All these labors and their conclusions were to be summarized in definite terms during a week of studies open to the general public. (Each year's proceedings are published in book form.)

That is how the first Week, entitled "The Intellectuals and the Charity of Christ" came about. Its success was so great that its organizers had to change twice to larger quarters. There was a terrific demand to hear Claudel, Daniel-Rops, Guardini, the Duke de Broglie and Robert Speaight.

Other celebrated speakers who have addressed the Center include such men as Emmanuel Mounier, Jacques Maritain, Louis Massignon, Walter Dirks, and Graham Greene. The successive themes attempted have been: Faith in Jesus Christ and the World Today; Humanism and Grace; Human Hope, Christian Hope. Little by little such manifestations have helped to fix in the minds of all French Catholics the fact that they are not out of touch with their time and modern thought, and that in the intellectual life of this postwar France, Catholic intellectuals play a leading role.

From time to time there have been words of encouragement from Cardinal Suhard, and more recently from Pope Pius XII, who reminded the adherents of Pax Romana of the necessity of being in the thick of contemporary thinking: "You will do more to serve the Church in bringing upon Christian thought the necessary bearing of your own experience and your learning. Today theologians should be able to rely on our sons who are scholars or scientists, philosophers or jurists, historians, sociologists or doctors, for a foundation of tested secular knowledge upon which to base their work."

THIS year the theme of the Week was built around a particularly difficult problem: the Church and Liberty. There is no question that in the opinion of unbelievers the word "liberty" enjoys no excellent reputation in the bosom of the Roman Church. The shades of Galileo and of the Grand Inquisitor rise up when liberty and Catholicism are spoken of. I am sure that American Catholics who have read Mr. Blanshard's books, which we have only heard of here, will have no trouble understanding what I mean.

Yet, for all this, we see a number of agnostics or atheists turning toward the Roman Church today as the last bulwark of human liberties menaced by totalitarianisms of every sort. Has the Church changed? What basically is the teaching of the Church regarding the liberty of man? Why does the Church condemn "liberalism"? What is that liberation which the Church brings us and which the Apostle evokes when he speaks of the glorious freedom of the sons of God? Is there a connection between spiritual liberty and temporal liberties, and are Christians duty-bound manfully to defend the latter?

Such were the general problems which the speakers at this last *Semaine* were to debate. Their speeches were scheduled for seven evenings devoted to the following subjects: 1) Liberty, Faith and Dogma, 2) Is Man Free Today?, 3) Spiritual Liberty and Temporal Liberties, 4) Liberty in Scientific and Medical Research, 5) The Liberty of the Writer and the Artist, 6) The Church and Liberties in History, 7) The Liberty of the Saints and Mystics.

The first evening offered a good example. This is the way the problems implied under "Liberty, Faith and Dogma" were described in the little tract distributed to the people attending the conference: "Does the teaching of the Bible on the liberation of man have a connection with the philosophical notion of liberty? Is not faith a submission of the intelligence and of one's life to a doctrine and a law? What place does it leave for the free inquiry of the mind?"

Four speakers were present to reply to these questions. But in order to avoid too much overlapping the tasks of each were specified. First of all M. Olivier Lacombe, professor of philosophy, vice-president of the Center and noted authority on Hinduism, went

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straight to the heart of the subject when he said: "The basic question is, are we Christians qualified to defend the liberties which are threatened?"

The answer did not seem to him open to any doubt. In the climate of Christian thought were born all the other ideas of liberty, even the most secularized ones. But, he added, the paradox of liberty—a paradox which its own fanatical adherents apparently do not understand—is that it develops only through humility, obedience and the acceptance of a discipline, rather than through anarchy, pride and revolt.

Father Daniélou plunged more deeply into theology. He is a fortyish Jesuit, son of a former minister of the Third Republic who did not have a reputation for being particularly clerical-minded.

Father Daniélou is brilliant, an able dialectician and an impassioned orator. After the Liberation he had all the young intellectuals of Paris running after him. He is a small man, dry and nervous, who never stands still. A great silence spread over the auditorium when he began to speak.

He told us that the essential liberating event in the history of mankind was the Resurrection of Christ. The victory of Christ over death was the victory of light over darkness, sin and evil. Through baptism and entry into the Church of Christ, the just man already has a foretaste of the total liberty which he will enjoy when he sees God face to face. Therefore man is not truly free except in and through faith.

It is faith which liberates us from our servitudes, and not biology or organization in the world. The Church is the authority which disposes the treasure of Revelation and Grace; it is she who guides and develops liberty. But is the Church independent of temporal powers, her enemies ask. The persecution undergone by her martyrs in Asia and behind the Iron Curtain make answer for the Church.

WITH Father Yves Congar the Dominican Order entered the discussion. Father Congar is well known in France for his works on the laity, the ecumenical movement and his recent treatise, *True and False Reform in the Church,* which aroused considerable controversy. He has a soft voice which is very appealing, a ruddy complexion, and flashing eyes. He exerts considerable influence.

The Dominican traced in the course of history the developments of the doctrine of liberty, which was born of Christianity, especially that radical liberty called free will. Father Congar has the ability to make clear to the general public philosophical and theological ideas with which they have little familiarity. The applause was very hearty when he finished speaking

It was up to Jean Guitton—again a professor of philosophy—to bring this session to a close by attacking the real problem of the evening: the conflict which is often manifest between the authority of the magisterium of the Church and the liberty of the seeker or thinker. His approach was marked by audacity and prudence. The professor's head shone like a billiard ball. By his manner, which seemed to give the false impression that here was an intellectual bothered by his subject, and through his witty sallies, he made the audience laugh and relax. His presentation was full of nuances and paradoxes.

It was almost midnight when the meeting broke up. Some went off in their own cars, others took the Metro or bus. Many lived an hour's distance from the Church of Sainte-Odile; still they came back evening after evening. Quite a few were from the French provinces or from abroad (Germany, Belgium, Holland, Spain), and they took part in the discussions that were held every afternoon with the speakers of the previous evening.

The second session dealt with a related subject, also very difficult and one on which people have impassioned views. What new idea of free will do the sciences of contemporary man—notably psychoanalysis—impose on us? Again, at the time of the hydrogen bomb, must not the ancient code of science, that "everything possible must be tried," be revised? Do doctors have the right to experiment on their patients? Does the Christian artist have the freedom to liberate himself from tradition, especially when it is a question of religious art?

Obviously I cannot even attempt to present here a resumé of all that was said during those evening sessions. They brought out many things to remind us today of truths about liberty which we are often tempted to forget. Liberty is not the possibility of doing whatever one wills, no matter what, but rather the capacity to adhere to the good, to Being. True liberty takes hold, first of all, in the interior order of the soul.

Christians, however, cannot be indifferent to the fate accorded to external liberties and should struggle with all their might against the forces of oppression or tyranny—political, economic or social—found in the world. For today states no longer exist for the sake of their citizens, but more and more citizens seem to exist for the sake of the state.

There were reminders from the speakers that the Church has been the true teacher of liberty in the West and that peoples obtained liberty approximately as Christianity spread geographically — a thing which many forget.

In short, these sessions succeeded in presenting doctrinal teaching to the general public. The presence of high church dignitaries, who came to bring a kind of official blessing, did not deprive these sessions either of their freedom of tone or of their originality.

ROBERT BARRAT.

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THE SCREEN

SWEENEY AMONG NIGHTINGALES

ANIMAL lovers will welcome a new English film, "Ivory Hunter," which went to Africa to develop its thesis that man has acted shamefully in wasting wild life. Actually this idea could have been illustrated on any continent and in practically every country, but for the purposes of this movie, Africa works out very well. The plot is vaguely based on experiences of Colonel Mervyn Cowie, a public-spirited man who was horrified at the ruthless extermination of animals in East Africa and devoted his energies to the starting of Kenya's National Parks for the preservation of wild life. Anthony Steel portrays the game warden who rebels at hunters' reckless shooting of animals.

Although the plot of "Ivory Hunter" is only a few pegs above the standard Tarzan pictures, its production by Michael Balcon is good and the direction of Harry Watt (who created the original story and is known in this country mainly for his Australian film "The Overlanders") is paced to keep you in a state of nervous excitement.

More incredible than the plot is the lack of emotion of the English who face hardship after hardship and lurking dangers, with the same aplomb with which Noel Coward's characters approach a cocktail party.

ANOTHER English film featuring untamed creatures is "The Wild Heart," most of which was handsomely photographed in Technicolor in the Shropshire country. Its main character is an uncivilized country lass whose pets are a fox, rabbits and several other strayed and maimed animals. You know that nature girl will come to no good since she views the world as a "big spring trap and us in it." Her father, who keeps bees, makes coffins and plays a harp, is worried about the girl's heritage from her gypsy mother, so he gets her to promise to marry the first man who asks her. The local minister, a very kindly man played by Cyril Cusak, asks and she accepts—although she has quite a yen for the handsome squire whom she has mixed up in her dreams with the black huntsman. After a period of quiet respectability with her husband, the girl tries to escape by living in the big manor house with the squire, but she soon realizes that the devil's trap is worse than man's.

This plot, derived from Mary Webb's novel *Gone to Earth,* could no doubt have been made into a simple movie of bucolic life, but as written, produced and directed by one of England's leading team of film makers, Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger ("Colonel Blimp," "Red Shoes," "Tales of Hoffman"), it is so pretentious and full of symbolism that it almost seems like a caricature.

Jennifer Jones struggles valiantly with the leading role but you never believe in her characterization. Even less convincing are David Farrar's wicked, leering squire and the tight-lipped, smug townsfolk who condemn the repenting heroine. Several of the scenes in "The Wild Heart" are extraordinarily beautiful; perhaps they will be enough to win audiences who can't resist this Housman locale.

AUDIENCES who can't resist a pleasant musical comedy untouched by problems of reality should find "Lovely To Look At" their meat. Oldsters who can remember the 1935 "Roberta" with lovely Irene Dunne and nimble Fred Astaire may be a bit nostalgic about the whole thing, but those seeing the new version unbiased will see it as an entertaining, though overproduced musical.

Red Skelton now plays the American who inherits half of a dress establishment in Paris and goes with his two impecunious buddies (Howard Keel, Gower Champion) to cash in on the inheritance so they can all produce a show. But the deceased Roberta's elaborate establishment also turns out to be broke, and Red's co-owners (Kathryn Grayson, Marge Champion) expect the boys to help them in the dress business. Well, the plot dickers back and forth until finally the big show is staged at Roberta's, and Roberta creations are made part of the act with the hope that buyers will get out their checkbooks.

This plot, which originally stems from a novel by Alice Duer Miller, is really only a clothes horse for the super-duper fashion show staged endlessly with more glitter and elegance and rhinestones and spangles and fancy colors than even Cecil DeMille thought up for "The Greatest Show on Earth."

Marge and Gower Champion do a starry dance up the milky way to "Smoke Gets in Your Eyes," and later Miss Grayson sings it. She and Keel also do several fetching duets, and in one scene Keel, playing a self-centered heel, sings the film's gay title song as a quartet appearing in four mirrors. Perhaps the most disappointing number in the movie is the off-hand manner in which such good dancers as the Champions do the rhythmic "I Won't Dance." But Producer Jack Cummings spared no expense in surfeiting his film. The cast also includes dancing Ann Miller, vivacious and decorative Zsa Zsa Gabor, and Kurt Kasznar, who helps out with the comedy whenever Skelton runs down. The Technicolor, though somewhat dazzling in the fashion show sequence, is excellent through most of the movie. The theaters should sell colored popcorn to go with it.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

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THE STAGE

SUNDAY BREAKFAST

IN THIS saga of small-town suffering, authors Emery Rubio and Miriam Balf have made a conventional beginners' mistake. They have assumed that so long as they maintain an absolute fidelity to observed life, so long as they face every fact squarely and write it down plainly, they will have produced an honest, accurate, and actable play. This is something like the methodical theater that Zola once asked for—one in which fact should be piled upon fact until some degree of truth shall have been arrived at—and it is, of course, intolerable. The language is tape recorded, the characterization ruthlessly detached. The insight of the creative artist is nowhere brought to bear upon the gloomy materials, to make them both meaningful and magically moving, and all a member of the audience can do is treat them as he would in life: by getting out of the neighborhood as quickly as possible.

The narrative concerns an incompetent jeweler, his dissatisfied wife, his randomly rebellious son, his romantically frantic elder daughter, and his youngest child—a girl who is presently on the borderline between the hopeful innocence of childhood and the sullen despair which must overtake her as a member of this wrangling family. The father tries to save her in a momentarily touching effort at domestic harmony, but these are paralyzed people, with unsalvageable habits of hysteria, and the play ends in a great slamming of doors as one after another bolts the place, presumably for good.

The play was nursed along in the writing by the New Dramatists' Committee and given its chance on the stage by the American National Theater and Academy. Both organizations are earnestly devoted to furthering new talent, and Mr. Rubio and Miss Balf are possessed of a sufficient literacy to merit this kind of encouragement. As yet, they simply haven't let the personal equation, the uniqueness of their own perceptive powers, intrude upon their slavishly annotated work. They are still doing dramatic shorthand. (*Closed at the Coronet*)

FIRST LADY

FOR once, City Center managed to set up a production which was in almost all respects more stylish than the play inside it. Helen Gahagan and Edna Best, as social enemies in the nation's capital, performed the old George Kaufman-Katharine Dayton farce with such style, vitality, and sheer good will that you kept wanting to pretend the piece hadn't dated. Sometimes —as in a second-act passage at arms between Miss Best and her antiquated bore of a husband—it wasn't any effort at all. At other times all the vivacity, shrewd timing, and deadly delivery in the world couldn't keep the lines from sounding like mechanically produced echoes. At that, the work of Miss Best, Miss Gahagan, Frederic Tozere, Ruth McDevitt, Ona Munson, Peggy Ann Garner, and some twenty others was fun to watch. (*Closed at City Center*)

WALTER KERR.

COMMUNICATIONS

"THE LOST LIBERALS"

Washington, D. C.

TO the Editors: Harry Barnard is manifestly right in saying that there never was any reason for genuine liberals to identify themselves with Alger Hiss and his like. But his letter in your May 30 issue betrays that even such a liberal, "in the great homeland of indigenous American progressiveness and liberalism," has for some reason, baffling to me, fallen into this mysterious identification.

He protests that he "never heard of Alger Hiss until the Dumbarton Oaks affair"; but then he goes on to say that "the answer to Budenz and Chambers is Altgeld and Bryan . . . The answer to Elizabeth Bentley is Jane Addams."

But why should a liberal feel that he must have an "answer" to Budenz, Chambers, and Bentley? Such a one, it seems to me, is unconsciously identifying himself —nay, the cause of liberalism—with the people who have been accused by Budenz, Chambers, and Bentley, with Hiss, Remington, Lattimore, Vincent, even (it would seem) with Eisler, Gold, and the Rosenbergs.

As Thomas E. Kennelly writes—in the May 30 issue—"It is impossible to serve the interests of liberalism by believing that which is false to be true." Or by believing that which is true to be false. The obstinacy of many liberals in refusing to take a dispassionate look at the evidence adduced by Budenz, Chambers, Bentley, et al., is in my opinion more hurtful than anything else to the cause of genuine liberalism. Its hurtfulness will grow as corroboration of that evidence continues to mount, as it is doing even now.

EDWARD J. HEFFRON.

"WALLS ARE CRUMBLING"

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: I recognize and honor the generous good will which animated the writing and the publication of Mr. Donald McDonald's review of Father Oesterreicher's *Walls Are Crumbling* (issue of May 16). Respect for one of the most permanently significant books of our time, for The Commonweal's objec-

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tivity, and concern for potential readers of *Walls Are Crumbling* cause me to suggest that the reviewer has, undoubtedly quite unintentionally, seriously misunderstood the book.

In the first place, *Walls Are Crumbling* was never intended as a biography of each of the seven Jewish philosophers whose discovery of Christ is recorded in it. Professor Maritain in his "Foreword" accurately classifies the book as a study of "the great movement . . . which stirs the minds of many among the sons of Israel and turns them to the true Messias of their people." The book studies seven Jewish philosophers as symbols—to quote Maritain again—of "a great reality," the reality that "walls are crumbling." These seven Jews begin to understand that "in becoming Christians . . . they have remained more than ever faithful to Israel and to its vocation."

That Professor Maritain, as against Mr. McDonald, has rightly understood the aim of this book is clear from the author's Preface. Father Oesterreicher's opening words are these: "This is a book of hope," —hope based on the fact that, after two thousand years, now for the first time there dawns on Jewish consciousness the new possibility that Jesus is the Christ. "His name is uttered, He is seen again." Implicit in this approach to Christ is "a new vision of the Church." These are two points that the book is about: that, as represented by these seven, Jewish people for the first time *see* Christ; and that in doing so, they see the Church anew. There are of course other subordinate aims to the book: to make it clear to Jew and Christian that it is "not a little thing that seven Jewish philosophers should, without forethought, without a plan of their own, without directing their efforts toward it, become defenders of Catholic thought and teaching; that they should parallel, confirm, even enrich it," and to help dissipate "the anti-Semitic cliché, so dangerous to the conscience of Christendom, that the Jews are the protagonists of the modern denial of faith, the advocates of materialistic philosophies, that they are well represented by Marx and Freud." Presumably too—though here I am attempting to read the author's mind, not to analyze the meaning of his book—Father Oesterreicher intended to forward the movement, so full of promise for Jew and Christian alike, of which his book is a study.

Of the seven paragraphs in Mr. McDonald's review the first five are devoted to establishing the proposition that *Walls Are Crumbling* is an only partially successful series of biographies. Since the book is not a series of biographies at all, those five paragraphs are irrelevant. The brief biographical details given are inserted only to render intelligible the occasional halts in the journey of these souls to Christ.

Mr. McDonald's second complaint is this: "However, the odyssey of each of these Jewish philosophers is not a peculiar Jew-to-Christian philosophical movement. The philosophy of each was not a Jewish philosophy which became Christian. Rather, it was a movement from skepticism and incertitude to certitude and the absolute." These sentences are more than a mere misunderstanding, more than mere hastiness on the part of the reviewer; they are his unconscious confession that the whole of the profound theme of the book has been lost on him.

Two points must be noted. 1) The fact that the philosophy of the seven here studied is not a specifically Jewish philosophy is only a sad guarantee that they are indeed Jews representative of their time, their long-kept 'No' to Christ making Jews peculiarly susceptible to the modern 'No,' i.e. susceptible to the negativity, "the incertitude and skepticism" of modern thought. 2) The book *is* a study of an authentic "Jew-to-Christian philosophical movement" precisely because it is only in discovering Christ and His Church that the Jew can recover and treasure his own Jewishness. "What is Jewish in Marx and Freud, and in other Jews who champion naturalistic philosophies, is their zeal. In fact, as St. Paul intimates in his letter to the Romans, zeal is the God-given character of the Jews . . . not even a Jew who makes Communism, science or literature his god loses this mark; but its only sure goal, its only congruous object, is the kingship of God in Christ. And, having discovered Him, the seven of this book are true Jews, an authentic voice."

THESE men go from being merely indistinguishably modern to the recovery of authentic Jewishness in Christ. Hence, reflections in the book on Christianity as the fulfillment of Judaism are no mere "interpolations" by the author, but are an explication of the deeper historical meaning of the work of these seven. This is the theme of the whole book, emerging precisely from the *new* fact being studied: the turning of the Jew to Christ to recover there all that he dissipates in subscribing to modern agnosticism.

Mr. McDonald's final paragraph expresses the judgment that the book does not "demonstrate" the "destruction" of the wall separating the Jew from Christ. To be sure, it does not: nor was it intended to do so. It does not "demonstrate" anything. But it does what it was supposed to do, which is, as the New York *Times* accurately said, to "document." What it documents is not the "destruction" but, as the title indicates, the "crumbling" of the wall. In great part, the wall still stands, it is not destroyed. The book under consideration simply notes that it is beginning to crumble, and God willing, the book itself may further that crumbling.

These are the larger issues raised by Mr. McDonald.

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But there are others. He draws too sharp a distinction between philosophical and religious thought. Such distinctions are useful for undergraduates but rather meaningless in the face of a soul on its way to Him who is Subsistent Truth, and Perfect Simplicity, without distinction. He complains, too, that some of the analysis of the thought of these men is "rough going." It is true that the book rejects the myth that Americans are intellectually adolescent, for it was "written for those who would rather think than not."

Perhaps you will forgive me if I say that more accurate appraisals of *Walls Are Crumbling* are contained in the statements made about it by Professor Maritain, Dr. Karl Stern, the late Father Walter Farrell, O.P., and in the reviews which have appeared in *America, Worship, The Catholic Worker, The Tablet,* and *The Thomist.* Yet I must conclude as I began. I know well that it was only the most admirable good will which moved the reviewer to write, and editors to publish the review in question.

JAMES V. MULLANEY.

REVIEWER'S REPLY

Davenport, Iowa

TO the Editors: (1) The profound Jacques Maritain notwithstanding, the reviewer's work begins with the author's first page and not with the preface, dust-jacket or other related but extraneous material. The reviewer's task is to discover the author's promissory purpose and decide whether he fulfills it. Father Oesterreicher's aim, however you phrase it, was to show that the walls between Jews and Christ are crumbling. I do not think in his sketches of seven Jewish philosophers that he shows this, and for the reasons which I stated in my review.

(2) I thought it was clear from the context of my review the meaning, the sense, in which I employed the term "biography." I used it to mean biography of the soul's motion to God, not in the sense of accumulation of dates and mundane events in a man's life. This meaning, I believe, is apparent in the first paragraph of my review.

(3) If critic Mullaney does not wish to admit the distinction between philosophical knowledge and religious wisdom, or if he wishes to dismiss it as an undergraduate distinction, he is welcome to the position. Granted, all knowledge and experience reside in the person, but there *is* a valid distinction between the philosophical and the religious, as Father Oesterreicher's book makes so painfully clear and as indicated in my review.

(4) When a book is "uneven and rough going," as I found Father Oesterreicher's book in spots, it may be the fault of the reader, as Mr. Mullaney suggests; it may be the fault of the writer, or it may be shared. A book that is hard reading is not necessarily profound. I make no judgment of Father Oesterreicher's book on that score, but I think the point should be kept in mind that profundity is more often found with clarity than it is with obscurity.

(5) With respect to the religious significance of a Jew who fulfills his Jewish destiny in Christ, that is not an extraordinary observation. It has been made before; indeed, Father Oesterreicher made it eloquently in his published sermons, "Seeds of Destiny." He would not have had to write another volume to reiterate that observation.

But he did write a volume to try to demonstrate that the "walls are crumbling" between Jews and Christ; he did set out to prove a religious truth about a religious movement of Jews to Christ, and I can only repeat that I think he did not succeed. I would be most happy if the seven Jewish philosophers about whom Father Oesterreicher wrote constituted the proportions of a "movement" from Israel to Christ. I would have been most happy to have been able to report that from their philosophical experience, which he reports with abundance, Father Oesterreicher was able to discern what in his book was indiscernible and which could not be reported—the connection, the causal connection (since he selected Jewish philosophers) between their philosophical experience and religious conversion. That was Father Oesterreicher's task if he wanted to justify the judgment in the title of his work.

With this added discussion of the book, I sincerely hope that *Walls Are Crumbling* will enjoy added sales. I repeat what I said in my review that the book is "valuable." And it may well be that other readers will believe, after reading it, that it is, as Mr. Mullaney thinks, "permanently significant." I cannot concur in that judgment.

DONALD MCDONALD.

TWO REQUESTS

Mr. W. B. Ready writes from the Stanford University Libraries at Stanford, California, that he is at present compiling an index of poems, plays and stories that have to do with the academic life. He will be grateful for any helpful suggestions from readers of The Commonweal.

Rev. E. Gutierrez, Rector of Sacred Heart College, Mawlai, Shillong, Assam, North India, appeals for books for his students of theology, now fifty in number. Father Gutierrez will welcome theology, philosophy and science books; such volumes will serve even if they are worn, soiled, or damaged, for his college library has yet to recover from the war when the building was occupied by soldiers and its contents scattered. Books should be sent directly to Father Gutierrez.

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The Christian in the World

"I believe that Christian hope has to do with time as well as with eternity; it has to do with politics but in the way that an antidote has to do with a poison. If there is one lesson which history has repeated for us **ad nauseam,** it is that Christianity reaches its worst state when Christians have political power. . . .

"Political Christianity—that is to say, the spiritual power of the Church in the service of Caesar and the formidable arm of Caesar in the service of the Church—has been found guilty of misdeeds everywhere, particularly in the Spain and France of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and again in our own day.

"It is enough for me to point out in what sense Christian hope cannot be of a political character—which does not mean that we may evade politics, for that would be the worst sort of politics because most of the time it would involve complacency, silence, complicity without risks. Today throughout a large part of the globe every thought is watched over, twisted, directed, even where scientific research and the poetic inspiration are concerned. All of us who believe in Christ's words, whatever our political affiliations, claim to have in our keeping the earthly hope of maintaining the inviolability of human conscience in the world.

"This earthly hope of Christians on the political level is truly much more than a hope; it is a certainty that as long as there remains a Christian worthy of the name in this world, indeed if there is only one Christian, he will sustain an interior life into which no policeman can force an entrance."

—FRANCOIS MAURIAC
in The Commonweal
June 22, 1951

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The Sorcerer's Apprentice

FRANCIS X. DUGGAN

TO some extent every age predetermines those that follow, but ours is a much more crucial age than any which has preceded it because various historical forces which have been building in Western civilization (which is now, in its material aspects, at least, world civilization), have now reached a state of such internal pressure and instability that some general upheaval seems imminent. Capitalism is bankrupt, and its world of economic liberalism is dying. A new order is arising whose character we cannot yet define, except to say generally that its origins lie in an awakened social consciousness and a disillusioned rejection of the values of the present age.

There is, of course, another alternative to the growth of a new society: that general destruction of civilized life which is the expectation of many. Incalculable evil will accompany either alternative, but the Christian, though he contemplates the future in fear and trembling, can be sure of the outcome. The Church must ultimately triumph over whatever powers may rule a rising civilization.

Now these remarks say nothing new, but the problems they deal with are constantly being discussed in new analyses of universal history, in re-interpretations of the old, or in a more particularized fashion, as investigations into the development of certain aspects of Western civilization—investigations which serve, beyond their function as special studies, to concretize the problems of modern existence. Such a study is Lewis Mumford's *Art and Technics* (Columbia University Press, $2.50).

Mr. Mumford broadly defines technics as "that part of human activity wherein, by an energetic organization of the process of work, man controls and directs the forces of nature for his own purposes." Art is differentiated from technics in that it is a specifically human function whose purpose is: "to widen the province of personality, so that feelings, emotions, attitudes, and values, in the special individualized form in which they happen in one particular person, in one particular culture, can be transmitted with all their force and meaning to other persons or to other cultures."

Mr. Duggan, a former member of the Notre Dame English faculty, is at present employed as a technical editor by the Studebaker Corporation.

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For order and power, Mr. Mumford explains, man turns to technics, as he turns to art for play, autonomous creation, and expression. Furthermore, without the externalizing attraction of technics, man might have been lured by the symbol away from reality and into the loss of his capacity for physical survival. "Complete attachment to the symbol, complete withdrawal into an inner world, can be as fatal to man's development as complete externalism."

These same thoughts have been differently and more explicitly expressed by Christopher Dawson, who has shown, in *Progress and Religion,* how the *practical* character of Western Christianity—its acceptance of the reality and validity of the physical world—made possible Western man's tremendous material progress, while the gnosticism and mystical withdrawal of the Eastern world religions contributed to the static, non-progressive character of the cultures they informed.

MR. MUMFORD recognizes that for brief moments in history it has seemed that man's technical advance had made possible a harmonious union of the subjective and the objective life, by freeing the human personality from a disorderly subjectivity and by modifying the natural world for human purposes. However, at the moment of our greatest expectations from technical advance, we have—like the Sorcerer's Apprentice—lost control of the machine, which has undermined our freedom and discrimination and is destroying our ability to create and enjoy. Mr. Mumford cites the development of printing and the reproductive arts, whose incalculable service to the advancement of culture and learning has suffered—chiefly through commercialization—the ironic perversion of being utilized now in overwhelming the mind by the mere quantity of their output.

Thus technics destroys art and personality. "Behold, then," says Mr. Mumford, "the-so-far-final result of our magnificent technical triumphs in the reproductive arts. We diminish the contents of the image: we narrow the human response: we progressively eliminate the powers of human choice: we overwhelm by repetition, and, in order to stave off boredom, we have to intensify the purely sensational aspects of the image. In the end, the final effect . . . is to devaluate the symbol itself." Finally, "the machine has become our main source of magic . . . . An age that has devaluated all its symbols has turned the machine itself into a universal symbol: a god to be worshipped." And a god to be fed! For the horrible irony is that "only under the pressure of war or preparation for war . . . does the machine, as now conceived, operate efficiently on its own terms."

What Mr. Mumford has said in depicting the perversion of art and technics agrees in substance with what other critics of our society have said. The study of history only heightens our awareness of the ironic disparity between human aims and achievements. Forces and movements inspired and led by the human will overrun their goals and realize an order of things quite different from the intentions of their originators. Revolutions for the abolition of tyranny and the establishment of freedom come to an end in the establishment of a new tyranny. Scientific and technical progress, so long the prophet of a new order, has brought us now to an era of profound unrest and spiritual chaos. That passion for order which Lewis Mumford has described has found satisfaction only in isolated segments of our society—in science, business, government, industry.

But no unity exists to integrate these specializations, and we expend our energies in the short-sighted perfection of immediate, isolated orders which expand independently of, and finally in conflict with, one another. We see now that the promise of modern civilization is fatuous; we have dissipated our spiritual and material resources on divergent ends and cross purposes whose selfish demands and jealous isolation now threaten the destruction of our civilization.

YET Mr. Mumford is oddly unpessimistic. Despite his realization of the perversion of technics, he ends his discussion in a tone of optimism which, though obviously based on the highest respect for the nature of man, seems groundless when considered as rising out of his analysis of the historical development of the machine.

It is true that art and technics are meeting in our day in balanced works: much modern architecture shows a healthy synthesis of the two. But that we are entering an era in which "all our mechanical operations . . . will be geared to produce the maximum quantity compatible with a fully developed life for both the person and the community" is a view of the future which the ruins of the past should by now have done much to obscure.

Mr. Mumford sees the industrial "shift of interest from the mechanical process to the human operator" as evidence of the change. But this new interest is the result of no recognition of the human person as an end: it is demanded by industrial efficiency and strengthens the suspicion that the person is seen only as a means to the furtherance of production. A much more radical "shift of interest" is necessary before we can justifiably predict the coming of a new era of freedom, and a balance of art and technics. Moreover, the role of the human worker in industry is being gradually reduced; and with that reduction the need for humanely-motivated restraint will be greatly lessened.

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Scientists today are at work on the development of a type of machine which holds more promise for man's mastery over the external world than any other development of the recent past. They are spurred in their work by the pricks of a necessity Mr. Mumford has recognized: "the necessity to keep the plant going." The complexity of modern existence has given rise to problems—the creation of new weapons, the analysis of insurance statistics, the electronic systematizing of automatic telephone exchanges—which are simply too intricate for the human brain and which defy verbal analysis.

The development of mechanical "brains" offers solutions to these problems, and promises other boons to mankind. The difficulties psychologists experience in exploring the intricacies of the human mind, with its estimated ten billion cells, may soon be removed by controlled experimentation on "brains" built to order. Such machines already exist, and operate in a manner analogous—to the point of horror—to the operations of the human brain.

These machines "remember" quantities and operations, "forget" them after periods of disuse, and "relearn" them in less time than the first learning required; they solve problems by following instructions which they work out in large part themselves; they can be "conditioned" to respond to secondary stimuli—exactly in the manner of Pavlov's dogs!

So remarkable are these machines that they can elicit from one of their designers the following response: "One intriguing effect in these higher forms of synthetic life is that as soon as two receptors and a learning circuit are provided, the possibility of a conflict neurosis immediately appears. In difficult situations the creature sulks or becomes wildly agitated and can be cured only by rest or shock—the two favorite stratagems of the psychiatrist. It appears that it would even be technically feasible to build processes of self-repair and of reproduction into these machines." And our enthusiast closes his remarks with a homage whose irony he does not intend: "Perhaps we flatter ourselves in thinking that man is the pinnacle of an estimable creation. Yet as our imitation of life becomes more faithful our veneration of its marvelous processes will not necessarily become less sincere."

WE must, however, be prudent in our expectations: "Not even symbolic logic will ever produce a machine that can do all man's thinking for him. But some logicians believe that symbolic logic may lead to the construction of synthetic languages that will help to free scientific thinking from the murky tyranny of words." How is that for devaluating the symbol? Moreover, this freedom from the murky tyranny of words is already in sight: "Indeed, modern logicians, assisted by the powerful new technique, have punched the classical Aristotelian system of logic full of holes . . . . Modern logic has abandoned one of Aristotle's most basic principles: the law of the excluded middle, meaning that a statement must be either true or false."

These remarks, and the experimentations they describe, give little reason for the conclusion that a humanization of the machine is taking place, or that there will be a synthesis of art and technics—on any universal scale—unless our little "creatures" learn to paint. However beneficial these computers may be, they will, in furthering our domination over nature, still more deeply confirm us in that profound irreverence which is the surest mark of our age—which considers all things as means, and nothing as an end. We are insulating ourselves from the real world, building a sterilized, air-conditioned universe which we are constantly refining—as at the present moment we seem so preoccupied with ridding it, through the agency of chlorophyll, of all its natural odors.

Mr. Mumford has recognized this process of insulation: "As a result of this whole mechanical process, we cease to live in the multidimensional world of reality, the world that brings into play every aspect of the human personality, from its bony structure to its tenderest emotions: we have substituted for this, largely through the mass production of graphic symbols—abetted indeed by a similar multiplication and reproduction of sounds—a secondhand world, a ghost-world in which everyone lives a secondhand and derivative life."

CHRIST'S grace is with us, and the Holy Ghost hovers over the world. But we cannot join in Mr. Mumford's optimistic conclusion that "in the end, proudly reversing Blake's dictum, we shall, I hope, be able to say: *Art elevated, imagination affirmed, peace governs the nations.*" Human society in a declining or misdirected civilization—a society whose centrifugal forces have broken restraint—is resurrected only after catastrophic upheavals, often involving the destruction of that civilization. We have not the certainty that such a fate awaits our own society, but much of the evidence we have points toward such a conclusion. Certainly there is no evidence to justify Mr. Mumford's Emersonian optimism.

It seems to me that only one attitude is warranted by either history or our present plight: a Christian or moral pessimism, which strives constantly against the powers of evil, and is aware simultaneously of the impossibility of any complete victory in Time: a pessimism whose strength to endure comes only from the realization that our Kingdom is not of this world. With grace, that realization may slow down our ironic progress.

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It All Began in Columbus, Ohio

THE THURBER ALBUM. By James Thurber. Simon and Schuster. $3.50.

By T. E. CASSIDY

IN this collection, Thurber is at home again and in love as always with his family and friends from Columbus, Ohio. The Thurber tribe in all its variety has a special wooly wonder, and this particular addition to the lore is full of delight and humor, love and tenderness, wisdom and wildness. The people here have a quality of their own; they are people with a very special kind of simple grandeur. Thurber's portraits, of course, are so good and so full-blown that the effect on the reader of this blend of artistry and artists (for all his folks are artists of one sort or another) is one of the happiest nostalgia.

He starts off with a heady introduction to a lot of rarities, including Kate Fisher, "who became, among other things, my grandmother" and told tales about her stepfather, Judge Stacy Taylor—the first picture in the Thurber "Time Exposure" gallery. The quiet fun begins and never ends until the last page and the last photographs.

"Lavender with a Difference," for example, tells of his mother, a lady of unpredictable but happy actions who managed to run home and family without letting either interfere with her zip and zest for fun. Some of her antics resulted in a kind of splendid chaos; indeed, Thurber remarks of one that "this twisted hour marked the occupation of my mind by a sense of confusion that has never left it." Surely, this is high tribute to a lady who could produce the uninterrupted confusion of James Thurber's comic genius, just as "Gentleman from Indiana" is high tribute to his father, a politician of sorts, an outstanding "good-minded" civic servant in Columbus, and a man who could say to his wife after a particularly outrageous prank: "Well, Mame, I hope you're satisfied." Adds her son, "She was."

There are certain particular delights that come out of this collection, delights that are part of the specific stories of people, but which, by themselves, make a kind of Americana. Who wouldn't appreciate the story of the Ohio Statehouse, where even "the largest rooms seem to have been tucked away in great, cool, unexpected corners by an architect with an elephantine sense of humor"? And wouldn't we like to find today some legislative correspondents who could match that particular Ohio gang who, "in dull political weather . . . had fun getting some of the more naive legislators to introduce bills banning short skirts for women or requiring cows to wear red lanterns attached to their tails? They joined gallery spectators in the bobwhite whistle the year the servants of the people solemnly debated the right

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of the quail to be protected as a songbird. When the bill was finally passed, one newspaperman, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten, wired his paper, 'Out of the frying pan into the choir.' "

Where would we find in such plenitude the old-time strong-man pioneer, whose fame would rest not on his amassing of fortune, or his genius in translating avarice into legal profit, but on his being eulogized, as was Jacob Fisher, for being the "strongest man for many miles below the city." Even on a poor throw, Jake Fisher was good. Uncle Mahlon reported: "It wasn't his best throw, but the fella went a good twenty feet." When Jake was seventy-seven, he died. And when he was asked if he wanted to forgive his enemies," he smiled. "I ain't got none," he said. "I licked 'em all."

Thurber talks, too, of some of his teachers at Ohio State—Billy Graves, Joe Taylor and Joe Denney —and of some of his old newspaper friends. The picture of Norman Kuehner of the Columbus *Dispatch* is a rare piece of reporting, as it that of Bob Ryder; and the story of Billy Ireland, the great cartoonist of the *Dispatch*, is mellow and warm. But all of these pieces are, even the loose ends and the random reminiscences. The loving care with which he handles his people marks Thurber as a very rich biographer. This fact alone would make his work great, even without the extraordinary deftness of phrase and line that has been the bold sign of the Thurber talent for making us smile during these many melancholy years.

Bigotry Report

THE TROUBLEMAKERS. By Arnold Forster and Benjamin Epstein. Doubleday. $3.50.

By PAUL V. FARRELL

ONE of the stories I heard as a boy was that of the Irish immigrant who went to the employment office of a New England shoe manufacturer about fifty years earlier, only to be greeted with the sign: "No Irish Catholics Wanted." He promptly took a pencil and scrawled across the sign, "The same is written on the gates of hell."

The spirit of intolerance which inspired the story is still abroad in many forms and places in this country, and against many kinds of people. But the spirit of poetic defiance with which it was met has little meaning now since both heaven and hell have become less and less of a reality, even to many of those who mention them in their daily prayers. Racial and religious hatred—whether active or passive—is indeed a damnable thing, and it is about time more Catholics, particularly, began to realize this and to fight *all* manifestations of it. All the hot blasts against Communism at Communion breakfasts last year will never cover up, for example, our portion of responsibility for the shameful Cicero affair. There is also room for a wel-

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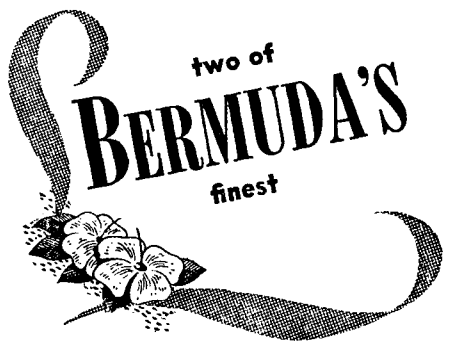
come sign on the gates of hell.

Any belief that organized bigotry and prejudice are on the wane in America will be rudely dispelled by this report by two officials of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. Starting with a complete and fascinating account of the weird campaign against Anna Rosenberg, Assistant Secretary of Defense, Forster and Epstein have compiled an exciting and almost disheartening record of the widespread activity against Jews, Negroes and Catholics in this country during the past year or two. *Almost* disheartening because the book itself is evidence that many people with courage and intelligence are ready to meet this business head on and expose it.

Because they have made every effort to be factual and temperate, the authors have concentrated on those trouble-makers who can be spotlighted by way of writings and speeches. They have, by implication, left it to the reader to judge where hate-mongering leaves the gutter and enters the parlor, a much more ambiguous area. They have written with admirable restraint of a frightening situation that would lead many writers to vociferous editorializing.

Many of the people mentioned in this book may be dismissed as the "lunatic fringe," and that is a real danger. Because it is the steady relentless pressure of the lunatics which eventually begins to convince many of the uninformed, the emotional, the naive—as it did me for a while—that the lie is the truth. And then the way is open for the Cicero riots, the Florida killings and similar terrorism. Is the guilt of the dynamiter and the rock-thrower any greater than that of the smug and indifferent Christian whose life and thought are a symbol of the contemptuous question, "Am I my brother's keeper?"

This book should be read by everyone interested in the preservation of our democracy, and then passed on to a friend or family member whose concept of his civic or religious responsibility in human relationships is limited more by circumstance than by malice. I feel sure that its shocking impact will help greatly in developing greater understanding and tolerance where the slightest good-will exists.



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HOMAGE TO CATALONIA. By George Orwell. With an introduction by Lionel Trilling. Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.

By GEOFFREY ASHE

GEORGE Orwell fought in Spain during the first winter of the Civil War, and his little-known volume of impressions has at last been reprinted. It almost goes without saying that this is an observant, courageous, honest record, leftist in spirit yet exceedingly embarrassing for the Left. Readers of Orwell's other books will be prepared likewise for his recurring confusion and bewilderment. Thus, he praises the Spaniards for their old-fashioned idealism and chivalry, yet he damns Franco as an anachronism. He dislikes the Church for obstructing pro-

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gress, yet he feels a rather puzzled love for much in Spain that is directly due to the obstruction.

His straight reporting is splendid. It covers the ardent near-revolution of the early months, the feeble mountain warfare in the northeast, and the relapse of Loyalist Spain into bourgeois democracy. Easily the most interesting section is the account of the struggle in Barcelona in May, 1937. The Communist version of this affair—that it was a treacherous rising by Anarchists and Trotskyites—was accepted by the world at large. Orwell judged that it was in fact a successful assault by the Communists themselves on the other two factions, carried out in keeping with a general plan.

Hence he was one of the first political writers to foreshadow the extraordinary Communist line of seven years later, when the Party opposed collectivism in a palpably revolutionary Europe. Moscow wished to prevent rival leftist groups from attaining power, and to gain time for their discrediting and disruption. But Orwell's insight in 1937 was not quite deep enough. He thought the Communists' demand for postponement of revolution in the interests of unity against Franco was a trap, that the alleged postponement was actually prevention. Eastern Europe has proved otherwise. When Moscow feels able to control the revolution, it does proceed, though it no longer resembles the sort of proletarian upsurge that Orwell witnessed when he arrived in Catalonia.

Not that this was a very promising spectacle. The revolution, as far as it went, seemingly had no power to create. Behind the carnival of equality there was only loss and disfigurement. Orwell's story supplies many glimpses of a single process at work in great matters and in small ones. All the churches he saw were wrecked—not converted to other uses, but simply wrecked. Wounded soldiers were forced to suffer atrociously because, in the absence of nuns, there were no competent nurses. The fine mounts of the cavalry were ridden to death by untrained militiamen. Bullfighting declined, not for ethical reasons, but because the Republic had antagonized the best matadors. Nothing compensated the marring of the Spanish pattern but a short-lived emotional debauch. When Orwell revisited Barcelona after his spell at the front, he found a city where the proletarian wave had subsided, leaving merely an embittered and mediocre version of the Barcelona that existed before. The Communist coup was the coup de grâce.

Church's Prayer

CHRIST IN THE LITURGY. By Dom Illtyd Trethowan, O.S.B. Sheed and Ward. $2.50.

THE BREVIARY EXPLAINED. By Pius Parsch. B. Herder. $6.

By JAMES F. KITTLESON

DOM Trethowan's own words provide the best introduction to his small book: "The Liturgy is the supreme apostolate; it is the Church herself, whose life is the Liturgy, who is the supreme witness to the Resurrection." I hope the words are

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provocative enough to win a wide readership for *Christ in the Liturgy*. For Dom Trethowan justifies his thesis well, if somewhat sketchily, in what he himself calls "an over-condensed book." This is the major drawback in a work which contains many exceptional passages. Its most important section is the first three chapters which contain a clear and even thrilling explanation of the much-discussed "mysterium" theory of Dom Odo Casel. However, in a book avowedly written for the laity, Dom Trethowan has given little evidence of his ability to popularize. His style (with many untranslated Latin quotations) wavers between the personal and the scientific. But for all that, it is to be hoped that the laity will not be discouraged by these superficial faults from reading an excellent and important book which will give a deeper understanding of the Mass and the Liturgical Year.

PIUS Parsch should need no introduction to anyone interested in the liturgy. His *The Liturgy of the Mass* has become a classic. It is a cause for rejoicing that his fine book on the Breviary is at last translated into English. For the seminarian and the priest it will supply a need long felt for a *complete* course on the meaning and history of their most constant prayer. For the religious and the laity who desire to pray the Divine Office it will serve as invaluable aid in overcoming the formidable obstacles which usually appear. *The Breviary Explained* studies the psalms and their arrangement and contains a commentary on the seasonal liturgy of the year as found in the Divine Office.

REVIEWERS

T. E. CASSIDY, who has taught at two American universities, is now doing specialized work at Columbia.

PAUL V. FARRELL is associate editor of Purchasing, a Conover-Mast publication.

GEOFFREY ASHE is a British critic whose work has appeared in The Month and other literary magazines. He is now living in Canada.

REV. JAMES F. KITTLESON is a parish priest in Miles City, Montana.

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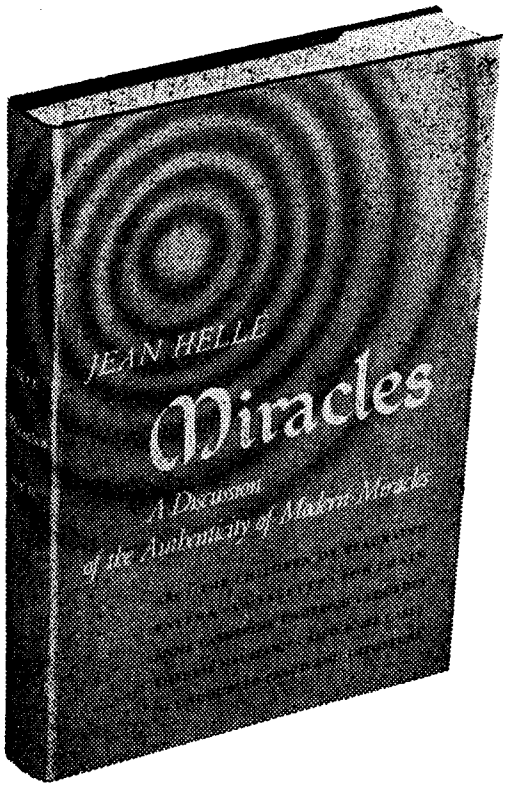

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